

2005 Annual Citizen Survey Results



City of Williamsburg February 6, 2006

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Each year, the City of Williamsburg conducts a survey of its citizens to assess the quality and value of local government services. The survey is one of several ways the city measures its performance with the goal of continuous improvement. This year **98** surveys were received in the mail, a **33%** response rate. All 98 were included in the tabulated results. This is the eleventh year the city has conducted a citizen satisfaction survey.

- **Graph 1:** Weighted scores of the overall city performance from 1995 to 2005. The average overall 2005 score is **4.1** (very good).
- **Graph 2:** The operating departments are graphed from 1995 to 2005. Departments weighted 2005 scores were consistent with prior years still averaging between outstanding and good.
- **Graph 3:** Weighted scores by "Value of Services," "Ease of Doing Business," and "Information From the City" are graphed from 1995 to 2005. Citizens continue to indicate that they feel as if they are getting their money's worth from city government and find it easy to do business with the city as indicated by the **4** (very good) score.
- **Graph 4:** Average weighted scores for "Safety" (**8.3**), "Beauty" (**8.7**), and "Livability" (**9.0**) are graphed with previous years. Is Williamsburg moving toward the City Council Vision of being a city that is "evermore safe, beautiful, and livable?" Respondents were asked to rate the City in each category on a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the highest.
- **Graph 5:** Weighted scores for direct department contact for the categories of "Responsiveness," "Qualifications," "Courtesy," and "Satisfaction with Outcomes" are graphed from 1995 to 2005. "Courtesy" continues to be the highest scoring area for city employees with "Qualifications," "Outcome," and "Responsiveness" closely following. Most citizens indicated that they had the most contact with the following departments: Commissioner of Revenue, Police and Finance.

This year's survey also asked residents about the Jamestown 2007 Commemoration, America's 400th Anniversary. The questions focused on residents awareness of the event, their likelihood to volunteer and where they receive information on the Commemoration Signature Events and activities. **Ninety-nine percent** of the survey participants indicated that they were very or somewhat aware of the Commemoration's significance and economic opportunity and 66% indicated they were very or somewhat likely to volunteer in some capacity to help make it a success. **Seventy-four percent** of survey respondents indicated that were very or somewhat knowledgeable of the Signature Events and community activities planned for 2007 and indicated that they find most of their information on these events in the daily and twice weekly newspapers.

CITY OF WILLIAMSBURG 2005 ANNUAL CITIZEN SURVEY RESULTS

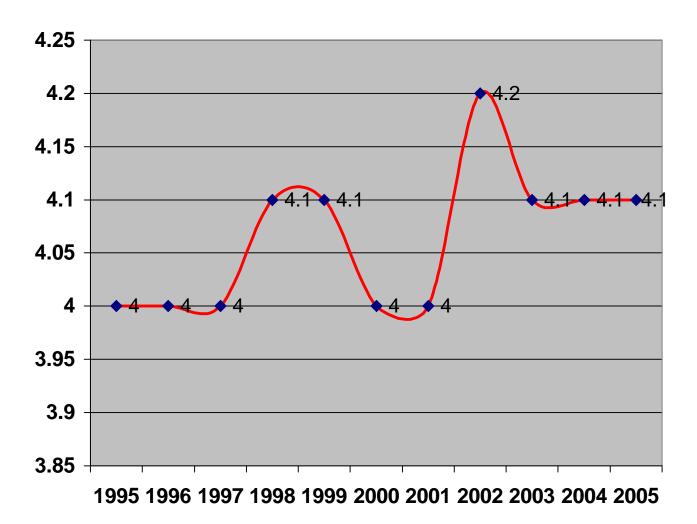
In addition to the statistical information, the open-ended comments are also very valuable in providing feedback on City services. We asked residents to comment on what they are **most pleased** with, and **what most needs improvement**. Where possible, a City employee will call respondents, thank them for their comments and offer to discuss their comments. In a few cases, we can take specific action to solve a problem.

A detailed recital of the comments is attached. It is an excellent way to get a sense of what is most important to City residents when they think about city government, both their "best" and their "worst."

This report also includes information on survey goals and methodology, plus the questions and results of all questions.

GRAPH 1
Overall Weighted Scores for Quality of Services
the City Provides
1995-2005

5=Outstanding, 4=Very Good, 3=Good, 2=Poor, 1=Unacceptable

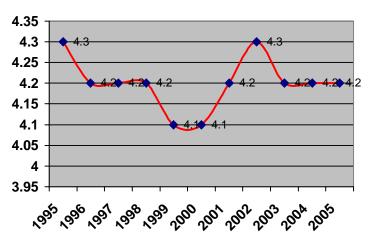


2005 score:4.1 (Very Good)

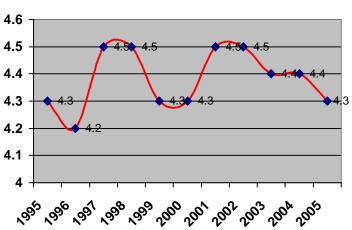
GRAPH 2 Weighted Scores By Department 1995-2005

5=Outstanding, 4=Very Good, 3=Good, 2=Poor, 1=Unacceptable

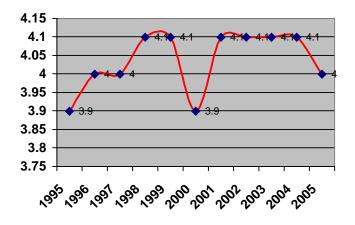
Police Department



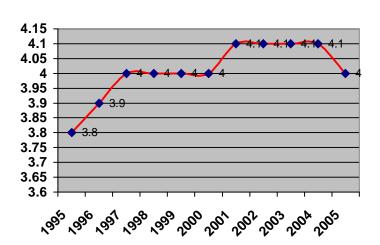
Fire Department



Public Works Department



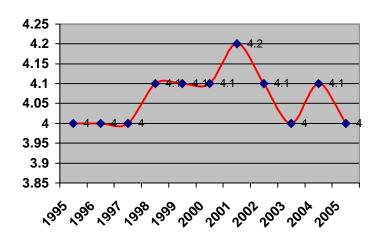
Public Utilities Department



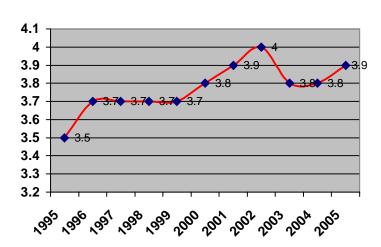
GRAPH 2 continued Weighted Scores By Department 1995-2005

5=Outstanding, 4=Very Good, 3=Good, 2=Poor, 1=Unacceptable

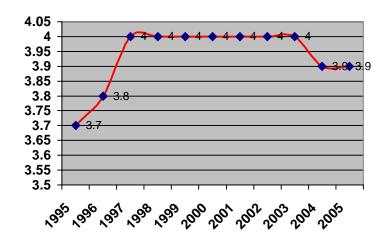
Parks & Recreation Department



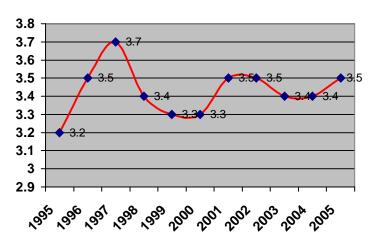
Human Services Department



Finance Department

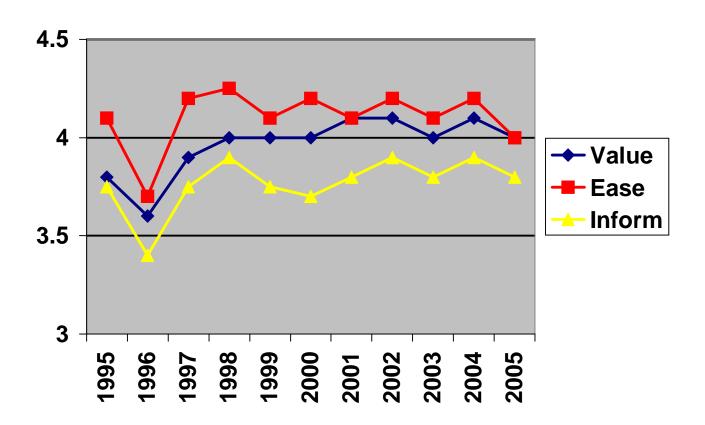


Planning Department



GRAPH 3
Weighted Scores by
Value of Services, Ease of Doing Business,

and Information From the City 1995-2005



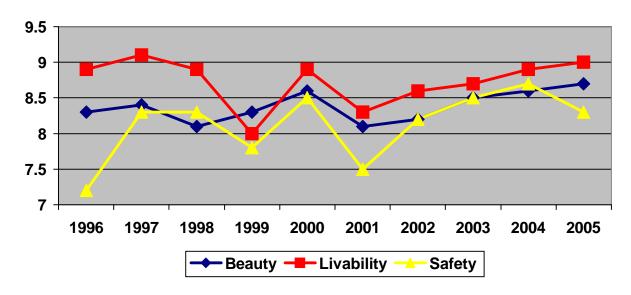
Weighted Scores for 2005:

Value of Service: 4.0

Ease of Doing Business: 4.0 Information from City: 3.8

GRAPH 4 Weighted Scores by Safety, Beauty, and Livability 1996 to 2005

(Scores range from 1 to 10. 10=perfect)

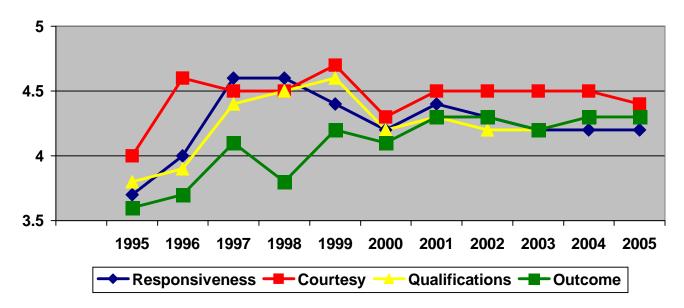


2005 Weighted Scores:

Safety: 8.3 Beauty: 8.7 Livability: 9.0

GRAPH 5 Weighted Scores by Direct Employee Contact 1995-2005

5=Outstanding, 4=Very Good, 3=Good, 2=Poor, 1=Unacceptable



2005 Weighted Scores:

Responsiveness: 4.2

Courtesy: 4.4 Qualifications: 4.3 Outcome: 4.3

SURVEY GOALS, PROCESS, & METHODOLOGY

Background

In 1995, the QUEST (Quality through Education, Service, & Teamwork) Team designed a citizen survey to seek feedback from city residents on the quality of city services. After this survey proved to be an excellent way to receive feedback, City Council agreed to conduct an annual citizen survey.

Goals

The City Manager and the QUEST Team feel strongly that all local governments need to continuously seek to improve the quality and effectiveness of public services. Tools like quality surveys and performance measurement aid in this task. The goals of the quality survey are threefold:

- Determine how City services are perceived in the eyes of residents, and educate them about city services where possible.
- Glean information from citizens on how to improve. Get specifics on services with which they are most pleased and most displeased, and seek information useful for training employees on better ways to deliver services.
- Analyze results over time.

Process

- Multiple choice questions on the survey were tabulated and analyzed by the Assistant City Manager Jodi Miller, with the assistance of Sandi Filicko in the City Manager's Office. Michelle Woolson of the Information Technology staff assisted with the Internet survey component.
- Open-ended questions were examined by the City Manager and department heads.
- Department heads are asked to convene employees, read all comments pertaining to their department, then report to the City Manager of any comments or actions that resulted from the findings.

Methodology

- 300 citizens were randomly selected to receive a survey with a self-addressed, metered envelope.
- 98 questionnaires were returned and tabulated in the 2005 results. 126 were returned in 2004, 152 in 2003, 117 in 2002, 131 in 2001, 142 in 2000, 136 in 1999, 147 in 1998, 125 in 1997, 114 in 1996, and 122 in 1995.
- The return rate was 33% in 2005 as compared to 42% in 2004, 51% in 2003, 39% in 2002, 44% in 2001, 47% in 2000, 45% in 1999, 49% in 1998, 42% in 1997, 38% in 1996, and 49% in 1995.
- A written survey was chosen because the QUEST Team wished to provide citizens with ample time to think about their responses.

SURVEY QUESTIONS & RESULTS

Overview: Thirty-nine males (42%) and 54 females (58%) participated in the 2005 survey. They tended to be long-term residents, 60 years and older (49%), with two people in the household. The average years in the city of respondents was 13 years.

1. Specifically, how do you rate the quality of the following city services?

Police (uniform patrol, investigations, 911 communications, crime prevention)

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Outstanding = 31% Very Good = 56 % Good = 13% Poor = 0% Unacceptable = 0%
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Fire (fire prevention & suppression, emergency medical service, emergency services)

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Outstanding = 42% Very Good = 49% Good = 9% 
Poor = 0% Unacceptable = 0%
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Public Works (streets, signals & signs, refuse & recycling, landscaping, mosquito control, cemetery)

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Outstanding = 33% Very Good = 42% Good = 20% Poor = 5% Unacceptable = 0%
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Public Utilities (water treatment & distribution, sewer)

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Outstanding =27% Very Good =50% Good = 20% Unacceptable = %
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Parks and Recreation (parks & ball field maintenance, athletic & leisure activities)

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□ Outstanding = 29%□ Very Good = 45%□ Good = 26%□ Unacceptable = 0%
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Human Services (assistance & services for youth, elderly, & families)

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Outstanding = 21% Very Good = 53% Good = 26% Poor =0% Unacceptable = 0%
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Finance (property assessment, tax billing & collection, water billing & collection, dog tags)

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Outstanding = 21% Very Good = 50% Good =29% Poor = % Unacceptable = 0%
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Planning (long-range planning, zoning enforcement, site plan & archit. review, building inspection)

□ Outstanding =17%	□ Very Good =36%	□ Good = 36%
□ Poor =11%	☐ Unacceptable = %	

2.	Overall, how do you	ra	te	the	qı	ual	ity	of :	ser	vio	ces	the city provides?
	☐ Outstanding =29% ☐ Poor = 0%		√ery Jna						Go	od	=17%	ó
3.	3. With which department(s) have you had direct contact in the last year? (You may check more than one box)											
	□ City Manager's Office□ Building Inspection□ Cedar Grove Cemete□ Commissioner of Research	ery			Fire Par	rks 8	ß Rε	ecrea	atio	n		□ Police□ Human Services□ Street/Landscape Division□ Water/Sewer Division
4.	Pick <u>one</u> department and rate below.	wit	h w	/hic	ch y	yοι	ı ha	ıve	ha	d t	he <u>n</u>	nost direct contact
Respondents were asked to rate a <u>specific department</u> according to four criteria. When all department data is <u>aggregated</u> we get an approximation of how the city rates in these important categories. Courtesy, Responsiveness and Satisfaction with Outcome are the top qualities of city staff.												
	Weighted scores of all departments (5=Outstanding, 4=Very Good, 3=Good, 2=Poor, 1=Unacceptable)											
	☐ Responsiveness = 4.:☐ Courtesy = 4.4	2									= 4.3 th Oเ	utcome = 4.3
5. The City's Vision Statement calls for Williamsburg to become progressively safer, more beautiful, and more livable. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate our city?												
	Very Unsafe	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Very Safe (8.3)
	Very Unattractive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Very Beautiful (8.7)
	Very Unlivable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Very Livable (9.0)

6. Overall, how would you rate the $\underline{\text{value}}$ of services you receive? (Are you getting your money's worth from city government?)								
□ Outstanding □ Poor = 0%		ood = 49% eptable = 0%	□ Good = 24%					
7. Overall, how easy	s the City of \	Williamsbu	rg to do busii	ness with?				
□ Very Easy =: □ Hard = 2%	28% □ Easy = □ Very H	: 46% ard = 0%	□ Neither =24%					
8. Overall, does the city affecting you?	do a good job	at keeping	you informed	of matters				
- -	= 23% □ Very G □ Unacce	ood = 41% eptable = 0%	□ Good = 36%					
9. Of the city's methods of communicating with the general public, rank the following from 1 (most) to 4 (least) according to how useful each is to you.								
1 Quarterly newsletter	4_ Ch. 48 bulle	tin <u>3</u> Inte	ernet web page	2_ Newspapers				
Jamestown 20	07 Commemo	ration, Ame	rica's 400 th An	niversary				
10. Are you aware of the historical significance and economic opportunity of the Jamestown 2007 Commemoration to our region?								
□ Very Aware = 82%	□ Somev	vhat Aware = 1	7% □ Not Aw	are = 1%				
11. How likely are you to Commemoration a succ		some capac	ity to help mak	ke the 2007				
□ Very Likely = 32%	□ Somev	vhat Likely = 34	1% □ Not Lik	ely = 34%				
12. How knowledgeable are you of the Signature Events and community activities planned for the 2007 Commemoration?								
□ Very Knowledgeable = 18%	□ Somewhat Kno	owledgeable =	56% □ Not Kno	owledgeable = 26%				
13. Where do you find <u>ractivities?</u>	nost of your in	formation fo	or the 2007 Co	mmemoration				
□ Websites*= 5% □ Daily Newspaper=28% □ Twice Weekly Newspaper=43% □ Television=13% □ Other =11%								
*Please indicate which website(s)				<u> </u>				

14 & 15 What one city service are you most pleased with? Why?

What one thing could we do to improve your level of satisfaction with city services?

The open-ended questions are a terrific form of feedback. The $8\frac{1}{2}$ x 14 inch survey format allows for more space to comment. Attached are the comments that were included with the 2005 survey results.

What one city service are you most pleased with? Why?

- Garbage pickup/recycle
- Election Commission, dealing with absentee voting
- Human Services-I am most familiar with this department. The personnel is exceptionally well
 qualified, experienced and truly concerned about the well being of the citizens. I could ask for
 nothing more in the community of my residence.
- Parks & Recreation The dog park is wonderful & well maintained (Waller Mill Park)
- Parks & Rec=Excellent Rec Center
- All
- All are good
- Leaf collection is great!!
- The people you hire most are helpful and kind.
- There is not one in particular. All services are great. We feel fortunate to have such a great city to live in. Everyone appears to go out of their way to be helpful & friendly.
- Parks & Rec because I use the gym regularly
- Ever since we moved to Williamsburg 5 years ago, Carolyn Murphy and her staff have been willing to listen to any concerns we have about the neighborhood, and have helped in may ways.
- Fortunately we have not required many city services. Trash removal and recycle service is excellent. Police and Fire appear to do a good job - no personal experience with either.
- Garbage Pick Up
- Garbage Pick Up and Street Cleaning because they are on the job and efficient
- Planning-I think they work very hard to keep Williamsburg from becoming more like Newport News, York and James City Counties who don't seem to plan their growth or businesses.
- Fire Department. Came to my home to change fire alarms. Very polite.
- Trash collection. The team is always prompt and polite. Dependable.
- I've found everyone helpful. I believe the city roads are difficult to navigate. There are few north and south directional signs. Streetlights are needed on some streets.
- The city is clean and well landscaped.

- Garbage Collection very reliable
- Landscape
- Very limited contact my sanitation worker contacts have been outstanding.
- Please w/all services I have dealt with.
- Personnel/all services very cooperative with my requests
- Police...excellent response & follow up!
- Parks & Rec
- I cannot single one out. They all do a very good job. Williamsburg's citizens are fortunate to have such a full array of services.
- The general atmosphere of the city openness good, government and livability good. Good schools.
- Parks. They are clean, well maintained.
- Landscaping, Road Maintenance
- Parks & Rec easy to use; easy to understand
- City police always responsive & courteous, very helpful
- Finance courtesy, efficiency
- Comm of Revenue was helpful with car tax ticket question and friendly
- Fire quick response, friendly, helpful, great ed pgm schools. Emergency medical quick, professional, extremely nice. City Arborist knowledgeable, straight forward, helpful
- Trash collection & recycling
- Garbage collection never had a service problem yet.
- Police service; trash pickup
- I moved from VA Beach 12/05. It's very peaceful and orderly here. Most of the residents are very polite and resourceful. In James City and Yorktown Counties outside of Williamsburg.
- Trash pick-up. Good company with cooperative sanitation engineers.
- Library, transit

- All-I walk from my house to CW, W&M and whistle all the while and I say to myself how fortunate to be alive, an American and to live in the charming well cared for (little) city!!!
- Emergency Management the fire department as well as Pete Walentisch's office have worked very hard to develop the CERT program. We are very fortunate to be able to live within the city of Williamsburg.
- Police "extra" services such as watching our house when we are away
- I am pleased with leaf removal and the city doing drive by inspections of yards. All the police are visible. Fire Department has great staff.
- Williamsburg
- Police-check-ups on home while away
- Planning-the maintenance of high architectural standards in such a historically important area
- Parks & Rec-the city's extensive green areas are beautiful and appear to be very well
 maintained. This makes living in the city very pleasant. Thanks for distributing this survey, it
 shows that you are proactively seeking ways to improve your job performance. As a resident, I
 appreciate that. Good luck!
- Water/sewer division. I had a very high water bill and went to the Municipal bldg and spoke
 with Jacquie Johnson. Ms. Johnson went through my past record and explained several
 reasons why the bill was so high. She made arrangements for the meter to be reread & made
 sure there were no other factors, such as a leaky toilet, broken irrigation that might have make
 the bill so high. She also suggested I have a sub meter installed on the irrigation system. Ms.
 Johnson was very helpful and knowledgeable regarding her job.
- Library I spend a lot of time using and enjoying services
- Police & Fire It's highest on my list of what is important in living standards
- All
- We have not used or had need of any of the services except our taxes and our trash pick up.
 Both of these are excellent.
- The recent marking and realignment of speed limit signs on Richmond Rd and Bypass Rd (near Capitol Landing) to more realistic and consistent limits. Although I have never been ticketed in these areas, or any other for that matter, I always found it strange that limits and markings in these areas were so inconsistent. So, well done!
- Police/Fire
- I love the parks here, because they are well maintained. Also, I frequently use the Williamsburg/James City County recreation center, but I'm not sure if it is technically in the city's jurisdiction. It's kept amazingly clean and is remarkably affordable. I swim laps there at least once a week.

What is the one thing we could do to improve your level of satisfaction with City services?

- Pickup of leaves in our neighborhood.
- Don't repave streets that are perfectly good!!
- The very difficult and complicated issue of homes rented by college students. They are so expensive to buy because of rent potential and so clearly not kept to the level of surrounding homes. I also wonder how many private residences will be available as CW, W&M and other "interests" take over homes from non-residential purposes.
- Sweep the street and enforce back yard cleaning
- Police cars need to stop speeding! If they need to go above the speed limit they should have their lights on (a reason to speed). Please set a good example!
- Please change the traffic pattern@ Longhill & Monticello intersection (yield on green signal). Drivers can't see the oncoming traffic that they are supposed to yield to. Those yielding often sit in the intersection till the light turns red so they can turn not wait. I've seen more accidents in that intersection since the pattern was changed.
- Make more parks on Jamestown Road is fine for us.
- Limit overexpansion & development
- We need more crosswalks for a pedestrian friendly city
- Keep up with the communication. Both "good & bad". It's the unknown that gets people's minds working!
- Lighten up on your zoning & ARB. Tough to live up to your standards (cost wise). Is vinyl really that bad??
- Street condition at 111 Woodmere Drive is in poor condition and no one has responded to my inquiries.
- More police presence on Parkway. There are a number of people, especially Bruton High students, who use Parkway as a cut-through. I would suggest a police patrol early in the a.m. about 7-7:30 and again about 1:30-2:30. The 25-mile/hour speed limit is not followed and few stop at the stop sign exiting the Colonial Parkway.

- For older citizens, carrying recycle bins out to the street is somewhat of a problem - pickup from their driveway would be a help.
- One very important issue has been when our garbage pickup was overlooked. We called immediately and our garbage was picked up very quickly. It's hard to improve on that service. All other services have been very good. We love living here!!
- Stop growth by any legal means
- Just keep up the good work.
- Reduce or eliminate car tax
- Haven't had much contact with city services so know very little about their levels of service
- Send a regular letter before wasting \$7.50 on a registered letter
- My WiFi reception is almost non-existent. No complaints though.
 Quarterly Quill has explained limits of service.
- Would like to see better enforcement of speed limits in town some people totally ignore the limits and do 15-25 mph over the speed limits.
- Very satisfied.
- Keep your noses to the "grindstone"
- More regulated building inspections.
- Pay property & sales tax online with credit card
- Building inspectors to be more consistent.
- Lower the professional business license tax rate! Just Kidding :)!!
- Make it more accessible to younger adults. I love the City, but find it hard to find places to live financially. I make too much money for low-income places, but not enough to buy the City's ridiculous over priced homes. We need to find an in between solution.
- Be more aggressive in inspecting and approving new construction of subdivision.
- Street/Sidewalk. It's almost impossible to walk or to do jogging because there are not enough sidewalks or the existing sidewalks are terribly structured.

- No major complaints...just keep up the good work.
- We feel there is a need for an overall review of objectives, events, timing for the 2007 Commemoration.
- Install additional guardrails along Merrimac Trail between Farm Fresh and DMV
- More long-range planning, with public included. (Do not need to inform public after the fact - better before)
- More rec activities in evening & on weekends for single people in their 20's or 30's. Many rec activities are either during the day when I work, or parent/child oriented
- There are several sewer drains on Indian Springs that need to be replaced. They are grates that back up with each rainstorm. 2) Please work toward better/safer bike paths in the city. It is a <u>great</u> walking city, but unacceptable bike paths. Some poor child is going to get hit by a car. They are forced to use sidewalks. Bad city planning - no consistent bike paths!!!!
- Bury electric lines throughout city & address traffic issues (speeding & the neighborhoods used as cut throughs)
- Better planning with regard to growth. NO MORE SHOPS
- Providing more parks w/ playground equipment and/or recreational facilities would make the city a lot more fun.
- Police: speeding and tailgating
- The city is too restrictive in terms of home improvement as long as we as homeowners use quality material such as stone or slate instead of brick on the exterior of our homes it should be approved. The city with its present policy should be call <u>Williamsbrick</u>
- Real estate tax assessment needs to be lower.
- Alleviate traffic congestion
- Keep taxes low, services constant
- There's always room for improvement but we are quite satisfied with city services. Garbage pickup within the neighborhood has sometimes been "hit or miss"

- Having more nightlife would be nice.
- Worst water of any town I have ever lived in-Undrinkable, I buy water in bottles instead-corrodes my pipes & fixtures. Better water would make me very happy!
- Focus more on absent landlords who do not care about their properties, interiors or exteriors
- Keep the tax low. Help other people and international people.
- Sidewalk on Prince George St. between N. Henry and Nassau needs attention. Rainwater stands in low place on Prince George St. between Nassau and Palace Green.
- Offer residents discounts for parking in garage on N. Henry ex. \$50/year or \$5/month
- Stricter standards on the appearance of rental property. Landscape & street maintenance & cleanliness throughout the city, especially close to the historic area & college is very poor. It is sad to see the <u>poor</u> sidewalk & streetscape appearances presenting itself to visitors.
- When I was looking at my current residence to decide whether I wanted to rent it, there was a great deal of evidence that a squatter was living in the house (clothes, food wrappings, a notebook). From what I heard, the police staked out the house that evening, but the squatter was still able to enter the house, retrieve his belongings, and escape undetected. Either an increase in police vigilance or providing the police with better equipment (infrared or night vision technology) may have allowed the police to better detect and apprehend the perpetrator. The policemen I met when the evidence was first detected were caring and professional, and with that I was impressed. My knowledge of the failure to detect the squatter is based off of hearsay, so my account may be incorrect. Nevertheless, I feel the perpetrator could have been caught. I liked the area so much, I moved in anyway, though!
- I am very satisfied with the city services. Whenever I have called for information or a problem I have had courteous, professional responses. I most recently had a problem with my water meter. From the time I phoned asking for someone to come & inspect the meter until the men arrived was about an hour. Great job!
- Planning I get notice of meetings but always get the results of those meetings - pateden@erols.com
- Not much, really, overall. Just a comment that once High Street swings into service and there's a traffic light at Treyburn & Ironbound, I hope that

Bristol Commons residents won't get caught by a traffic backup on Ironbound that doesn't permit an easy left turn out of here.

- Stop war against citizens. City works for public not public works for city.
 Be nice. Too much behind scenes actions not adequately publicized.
 Finance Assessments should show new & old assessment. Planning War against citizens is awful. Still awaiting a return phone call. Suing Bob
 Casey is terrible. Be nice.
- I wish there was more free parking for residents near Colonial Williamsburg. I love to shop in Merchant's Square, but after find myself going elsewhere due to lack of parking.